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FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1211

INFO RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE

RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 0893

RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 4742

RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH 7667

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RIYADH 006976

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [FINR](#) [KISL](#) [SA](#) [PHUM](#)

SUBJECT: POLITICAL POETRY PRAISES HEZBOLLAH

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Michael Gfoeller for reasons 1.4 (b) a  
nd (d).

**¶1.** (C) Al Hayat newspaper published on August 26 a political poem entitled "Lebanon," which was written by Dr. Ghazi Al-Qusaibee, Minister of Labor and key advisor to Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah. Al-Qusaibee, a famous poet and writer in the Arab world, is commonly known as a secular liberal and sometimes accused of being an "agent" of the Americans. Unpopular with the religious community, Al-Qusaibee has occupied numerous positions in the Government. He was formerly the Minister of Water and Electricity, as well as the Saudi ambassador to Bahrain and Britain. It is widely rumored that Al-Qusaibee lost the ambassadorship to Britain because of a poem he wrote in 2002 that espoused views contrary to the official SAG position. In that poem, he criticized the U.S. and praised suicide bombers -- specifically, female Palestinian suicide bomber Ayat Al-Akhas, whom he described as a martyr.

**¶2.** (C) COMMENT: The literary quality of the verse in the Lebanon poem is very high, and some local Saudi contacts suggested that Al-Qusaibee wrote it in order to gain popularity with the secular, liberal element of the population. Several said the poem is actually in praise of a Hezbollah victory, which, they said, Al-Qusaibee describes as a victory for all Arab and Muslim countries. However, his sarcastic reference to a "victory with a thousand killed souls and 20 thousand injured" and the accompanying "wailing of women" calls into question whether he means this was a victory -- or a tragedy. One contact said that Al-Qusaibee refers to Lebanon as a "saint" because, despite the hardships faced by the country, it is still the "most loved" by Arabs and the country most accepting of diverse political views. It was also thought that the mention of the "mother of civilization" was a sarcastic reference to the U.S. While the public mood in Saudi Arabia regarding the crisis in Lebanon has quieted somewhat, there clearly remains a great deal of empathy for the Lebanese people. There is also an undercurrent of support among the population for Hezbollah that is largely unspoken -- despite vocal criticism of Israel and the U.S. Al-Qusaibee's poem, said some of our contacts, merely expresses what many Saudis think about Hezbollah, but do not say. It is also disturbing that, as one of King Abdullah's closest advisors on issues other than those relating to labor, Qusaibee's views could well reflect -- although to what extent is unknown -- those of the King. END COMMENT.

**¶3.** (U) BEGIN TRANSLATED POEM TEXT:

Every day you die and live  
Die and live

As if - you alone - are  
The intimate friend of life  
The passionate lover of death  
Every day we come to you  
To hug the newborn in his cradle  
Then recite his death ceremony  
We bury you in the grave  
Then bring life to you again  
We wonder about these repeated miracles  
A saint you are as in mythologies  
Forgiving the killers  
Kissing the hand of the criminals  
Carrying your colored cedar  
Bandaging it in your hands  
From the bows of the enemies  
The stabs of the proud companions  
Peace be upon you  
When you are alone  
Treating with patience the revel of cannons  
Putting out the flames of fire with our tears  
Sending your heart to beat  
Within the ribs of those bereaved of their children  
Peace be upon you  
At a Qana wedding where the Mother  
Of Civilizations has danced - on the blood of children  
With the ecstasy of harlots  
We - May God be with you - witness  
That you are the symbol of heroism and sacrifices  
We swear that we are the victorious  
We flee happily with your victory - we split among us your  
victory  
We welcome victory with cries of joy  
You embrace your victory with a thousand killed souls

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And 20 thousand injured  
And a capital staged with death  
Covered with silence  
Except the wailing of women  
We - May God be with you - swear that  
With you, we defeated the usurpers  
With you, we waded into horror  
With you, we slapped arrogance  
Peace be upon you  
You fight for the Arabs and the Persians  
God, you are great  
Antar of this time  
The time of leadership  
And comics.

END TRANSLATED POEM TEXT.  
GFOELLER